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Tom Munson - Response to questions concerning the La Sal Mine

From: Tom Munson
To: Paul Baker; William Harrison
Date: 7/10/2012 8:24 AM
Subject: Response to questions concerning the La Sal Mine

Hello Mr. Harrison,

I have tried to answer your questions as best as I could given the fact that your questions are speculative and the regulatory responsibility does not always fall under the Division of Oil, gas and Mining. Thank you for expressing your concerns, and please feel free to let us know immediately if any of the things you have discussed ever occur. I have formatted my responses according to the 4 questions you asked.

1. Monitors On Your Property. The Division is not sure what you would want monitored and how this would necessarily show what detrimental effects were from the mine, and it does not have the regulatory authority to require monitoring. Airborne contaminants would come under the jurisdiction of the Division of Air Quality.
2. Water Rights. The Division currently has no data to suggest ground water will be affected by this mining operation. By all indications the mine is dry, and no water is going to be pumped out of the mine. There is little potential for groundwater contamination because of the low precipitation and high evapotranspiration rates. If the operation plan changes or has the potential to affect groundwater, the Division will request more data be collected and a treatment plan to be put in place.
3. The Division considers that any surface disturbing activity related to mining will need to be reclaimed to current standards.
4. We do not litigate personal property disputes and the Division would hope that any contamination would be identified and corrected before this occurs.

We suggest that you consider establishing baseline information for the water quality of your well. Without this information it would be impossible to prove that the mine had caused any damage. You would probably want to take a series of samples over about a year, and you should ensure that the samples were taken properly, that the right preservatives and types of containers were used, that holding time requirements were met, and that the chain of custody was documented. If you have concerns about air quality, you should probably check with the Division of Air Quality about how to establish baseline information.

I will be in your area this week and will stop by to talk with you if you like.

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